

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 TEHRAN 06611 261252Z

ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W

-----080599 261254Z /45

P 260826Z JUL 77

FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3740

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEHRAN 6611

NODIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS CD US

SUBJ: MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO CHAD

REF: STATE 166492

1. I APPRECIATE DEPT'S ACTION INCLUDING TEHRAN ON DISTRIBUTION OF CABLES CONCERNING MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO CHAD. PENDING FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS, I WILL TAKE NO REPEAT NO ACTION WITH RESPECT IRANIAN OFFICIALS ON THIS SUBJECT.

2. HOWEVER, IN INTERESTS PROVIDING DEPT WITH MAXIMUM USEFUL DATA, I WILL REPLY TO QUESTIONS RAISED PARA 3 REFTEL.

A. IRAN WOULD PROBABLY BE PREPARED JOIN A MEETING OF "FRIENDS OF CHAD" HOSTED BY FRANCE. REACTION WOULD DEPEND IN SOME MEASURE ON MANNER IN WHICH MEETING CONVENED AND ANNOUNCED. IT WOULD ALSO DEPEND ON ASSURANCE THAT SOME OTHER ISLAMIC NATIONS (PREFEREBLY SAUDI ARABIA) WOULD BE INVOLVED.

B. IRAN IS NOT OVERLY SUPPLIED WITH EXCESS NON-LETHAL EQUIPMENT, BUT HAS PROVIDED SUCH ITEMS AS LAND-ROVERS IN SIMILAR CIRCUMSTANCES.

C. IRANIAN REACTION TO CHADIAN REQUEST FOR TRANSFER OF CONFIDENTIAL

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US-ORIGIN MILITARY EQUIPMENT WOULD PROBABLY BE POSITIVE. IT SHOULD BE REALIZED, OF COURSE, THAT ITEMS DESIRED BY CHAD HAVE BEEN PURCHASED BY IRAN UNDER FMS PROCEDURES RATHER THAN GRANTED UNDER MAP LARGESSE. HOWEVER, IRAN DOES HAVE CARGO HELICOPTERS, COBRA HELICOPTER GUNSHIPS AND UH-E1 COMMAND AND CONTROL SHIPS WHICH ARE ALL OF US ORIGIN OR US-LICENSED ITALIAN PRODUCTION. THE ONLY LIGHT TANKS IN

IRANIAN INVENTORY ARE BRITISH-ORIGIN SCORPIONS.

3. A SERIOUS QUESTION WOULD, OF COURSE, ARISE IN ASSESSING WHETHER THESE HELICOPTERS AND OTHER EQUIPMENT COULD BE OPERATED BY CHADIANS OR WHETHER CHAD WOULD EXPECT IRANIAN PILOTS TO BE ASSOCIATED WITH THE EQUIPMENT TRANSFER. I THINK THE SHAH WOULD FIND CHAD SOMEWHAT FAR AFIELD FOR OPERATIONS BY IRANIAN PERSONNEL.

4. ALL OF THE FOREGOING ASSESSMENT IS PREMISED ON THE ASSUMPTION THAT US RELATIONS WITH IRAN REMAIN ON THEIR CURRENT COOPERATIVE BASIS. IF THE US, THROUGH CONGRESSIONAL ACTION OR OTHERWISE, RENEGES ON ITS UNDERTAKING TO PROVIDE AWACS AIRCRAFT, I BELIEVE THE SHAH WILL RETRENCH SIGNIFICANTLY ON HIS WILLINGNESS TO ASSUME RISKS IN HIS RELATIONS WITH THE SOVIETS. IF HE BELIEVES HE IS LOSING US SUPPORT AND UNDERSTANDING, HE WILL BEGIN AN "AGONIZING REAPPRAISAL", WHICH, AT LEAST FOR THE TIME BEING, WOULD PREDICTABLY PARALYZE ANY INITIATIVES ON HIS PART.

5. THEREFORE, I FEEL IT WOULD BE PRUDENT TO RECOGNIZE THAT AUGUST 5 WILL BE A SIGNIFICANT DATE IN ADDRESSING MATTERS SUCH AS THIS. IF, ON THAT DATE, THE AWACS TRANSFER HAS SAFELY PASSED THROUGH CONGRESSIONAL SHOALS, I BELIEVE IRAN WILL BE WILLING TO STAND UP AND BE COUNTED FOR CHAD. IF AWACS FOUNDERS, IRAN WILL PROBABLY ABSTAIN.

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## Message Attributes

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**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
22 May 2009  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009